

O'Malley says Md. has 'no more room' for road expansions

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August 15, 2010

Governor blasts Ehrlich for opposing Purple Line

Gov. Martin O'Malley is asking Marylanders to brace for the delays, crowding and derailings that come with mass transit, because the state has "no more room" for roads.

"We have to figure out better ways to grow as a people and get from point A to point B," O'Malley said on NPR, in support of Maryland's proposed 16-mile light rail line between Bethesda and New Carrollton, dubbed the Purple Line.

"There is no more room to build more roads, and I don't see where we have a reasonable choice other than to dial up mass transit," he said.

But O'Malley was hard-pressed to respond to recent heat-related power outages that caused major delays on Maryland's MARC commuter train service.

After listening to a long list of MARC's most recent hiccups, O'Malley conceded, "All of those things are true," but quickly changed the focus to Metro.

"Actually, let me back up and take another run at that. ... There are clearly safety issues with [Metro]," he said, before unleashing criticisms on the safety-plagued transit system.

O'Malley eventually turned back to MARC and touted new locomotives the state has bought, in addition to doubling capital investment in the rail.

O'Malley, a Democrat, has long been one of the region's most vocal supporters of mass transit. The contentious Purple Line is the literal manifestation of his campaign slogan, "moving Maryland forward." The

\$1.68 billion line would connect the Bethesda and New Carrollton Metro stations.

O'Malley said former Gov. Bob Ehrlich's opposition to the Purple Line is evidence that his Republican challenger is trying to "move Maryland back."

"For whatever reason, Bob Ehrlich has decided to turn the clock back and take Maryland back," O'Malley said.

Ehrlich has said he would rather develop a rapid bus line than spend millions on light rail. A rapid bus line would cost one third of what the Purple Line would cost.

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Read more at the Washington Examiner:

http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/local/O_Malley-says-Md_-has-_no-room_-for-roads-1010051-100655319.html#ixzz0wmZE8tE3